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of scholarly age and finds instead its pessimism and prejudice. The Japanese, the Democratic party and President Wilson seem particularly to call forth the condemnation of the author, and the city of San Francisco is evidently dear to his heart. In justice it should be said that the book was written before the United States declared war, and that its pessimism is moderated by the conclusion that everything is not altogether bad; there is a thin ray of hope in the fact that things are "not so bad as they might be."

EDWARD ELLIOTT.

*University of California.*

*Historical Backgrounds of the Great War.* By FRANK J. ADKINS. (New York: R. M. McBride. 1918. Pp. 292.)

*The Soul of Democracy.* By EDWARD HOWARD GRIGGS. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1918. Pp. 128.)

*Man's Supreme Inheritance.* By F. MATHIAS ALEXANDER. (E. P. Dutton and Company. 1918.)

While we are living under the shadow of the greatest world tragedy in the history of mankind, many books are being written about it, and most of them give us ideas and thoughts which are more or less valuable. Professor Adkins in four chapters covers the underlying causes of the conflict. He points out those problems and rivalries which have arisen during the past three centuries. He shows how they steadily increased in importance until they culminated in hostilities in 1914. Professor Adkins aims rather at provoking thought than of imparting exact information, and wins in his effort to make readers of his book think and inquire for themselves about the war and its effects.

Edward Howard Griggs, in his *Soul of Democracy*, covers twenty-two chapters in less than 150 pages. Each of these chapters is of sufficient importance to have space enough for a volume. In fact whole volumes have been written on each chapter during the past year. He covers feminism, religion, education, literature and socialism. The author believes that our education has been too academic and too much molded by tradition. He says: "If there is one field where we could reasonably expect to find pure democracy, it is in our higher educational institutions. In a college or university, where a group of young men and women, and a group of older men and women are gathered apart, out of the severer economic struggle, dedicated to ideal ends: there, surely, we could expect pure democracy in organization and re-

lationship; yet the tendency has been steadily toward autocracy. One can count the fingers of both hands and not cover the list of college and university presidents who have taken office during the last fifteen years only on condition that they have complete authority over the educational policy of the institution, and often over its financial policy as well. The reason is obvious: We run a railroad efficiently by getting a good president; why not a university? The real evil is in the effect upon the rank and file of those governed by the autocrat." He lauds the German university system with its self-governing faculty.

Conscious guidance and control in relation to human evolution in civilization is the subject upon which F. Mathias Alexander writes in his book *Man's Supreme Inheritance*. Many persons have pointed out the strain which has come upon human nature in the change from a state of animal savagery to present civilization. John Dewey, who has written an introduction for the book, says: "No one, it seems to me, has grasped the meaning, dangers and possibilities of this change more lucidly and completely than Mr. Alexander." Mr. Alexander offers quite an original thesis which is concerned with all the problems of life, education and evolution, with the shortcomings of civilization as indicated by the present great war. His discussions breathe great reverence and a sort of religious attitude toward the body. When such a religious attitude toward the body becomes more general we shall have an atmosphere favorable to securing the conscious control which is urged.

J. E. OSTER.

*College of the City of New York.*